

Rodriguez, Teague, Border Lawmakers Work to Stop Border Violence Introduce \$379 Million in Funding for Law Enforcement

Washington, DC-Members of Congress Ciro D. Rodriguez (TX-23), Harry Teague (NM-02), and nine others have introduced HR 1448, the Border Reinforcement and Violence Reduction Act in order to put a halt to continuing drug cartel fueled violence along the United States-Mexico border. The bill would increase funding for several existing law enforcement programs for a period of two years with \$379 million to crack down on gun smuggling and alleviate the violence from drug cartels happening on the border every day.

"It's critical that we keep our communities safe by ensuring that our borders are secure," said Rodriguez. "America can only be safe and secure when our neighbors are also secure. With additional funding for federal and local law enforcement we should be able to help put a stop to the continuing violence plaguing border communities."

"The security of our borders directly affects the security of America and the lives of many of my constituents. The funding in this bill provides law enforcement with additional resources to aggressively go after the illegal gun smuggling that has fueled much of the violence along the border," said Teague. "These gun smugglers are not just supplying the illegal weapons that are used in Mexico to commit violent crimes against law enforcement personnel and sometimes our own citizens, they are also making our border less safe by exploiting weaknesses in our security. We need to put these gun smugglers out of business by stopping the flow of illegal guns going from the U.S. to Mexico. By doing that we strengthen the security of our borders and make our communities safer."

The bill would direct the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) to coordinate a comprehensive and strategic plan for the inspection of vehicles heading into Mexico and provides much needed resources at the local level for law enforcement. Additionally, there are increased resources for both the Bureau of Alcohol Tobacco and Firearms (ATF) and Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) to enhance their border task forces as well as improve cooperation with Mexico by assigning additional agents and providing additional training and equipment.

The bill also provides a provision that would afford protections to law-abiding gun owners. The

nine other original cosponsors of the bill all have districts along the U.S. southern border with Mexico. They are Henry Cuellar (TX-28), Bob Filner (CA-51), Gene Green (TX-29), Ruben Hinojosa (TX-15), Silvestre Reyes (TX-16), Chet Edwards (TX-17), Gabrielle Giffords (AZ-8), Raul Grijalva (AZ-7), and Solomon Ortiz (TX-27).

Specific funding of the local and federal agencies are explained further below:

\$30 Million over two years for expanded resources for the Project Gunrunner initiative of the ATF to identify, investigate, and prosecute firearms trafficking across the U.S.- Mexico border.

\$30 Million over two years for additional resources for the Operation Armas Cruzadas initiative of the ICE to identify, investigate, and prosecute firearms trafficking across the U.S.- Mexico border.

\$300 million over two years to sheriffs departments and local police departments in counties on the border, including tribal police to hire, train and equip personnel; reimburse for costs incurred supporting border security efforts and to combat drug trafficking, human smuggling, destruction of private property, as well as detaining, housing, and transporting individuals who have entered the country illegally.

\$19 Million over two years for additional enhanced international cooperation by U.S. agents for missions in Mexico including training and equipment.

Requires the Secretary of Homeland Security to coordinate with the heads of other relevant Federal, State, and local law enforcement agencies along the border to develop a comprehensive and strategic plan for the inspection of vehicles heading into Mexico.

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